

# Library Experiences of Transfer Students at an Urban Commuter Campus

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**#SIT17**

**In short: We researched transfer students on our campus and learned that some of our assumptions were wrong, so we need to change our approach.**

**Why are we focusing on  
“library experiences”  
of transfer students?**

**Previous research has  
been relatively limited.**

Searching: **ERIC** | [Choose Databases](#)

Journal of The First-Year Experience

SO Journal Title ▼

AND ▼

Students in Transition

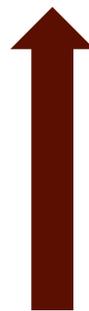
SO Journal Title ▼

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Select a Field (option... ▼)

[Basic Search](#) [Advanced Search](#) [Search History ▶](#)[Refine Results](#)**Search Results: 1 - 30 of 183**

Date Ol



Searching: **ERIC** | [Choose Databases](#)

Journal of The First-Year Experience

SO Journal Title ▼

AND ▼

Students in Transition

SO Journal Title ▼

AND ▼

library

Select a Field (option... ▼

[Basic Search](#) [Advanced Search](#) [Search History](#)

**No results were found.**

**Note:** Results may be found using **SmartText Searching**.

**The literature focused on transfer students doesn't mention libraries very much, and library literature doesn't mention transfer students very much (though the latter is starting to change).**

**A few trends in the library  
literature stand out...**

# The move from two year/community colleges to four year colleges/universities:

Kessinger, P. (2013). Integrated instruction framework for information literacy. *Journal of Information Literacy*, 7(2), 33-59. doi:10.11645/7.2.1807

Nelson, E. (2017). Information literacy needs of community college students in transition: A literature review. *Reference Services Review*, 45(2), 278-285. doi:10.1108/RSR-11-2016-0078

Townsend, B. K. & Wilson, K. (2006). "A hand hold for a little bit": Factors facilitating the success of community college transfer students to a large research university. *Journal of College Student Development*, 47(4), 439-456. doi: 10.1353/csd.2006.0052

# Descriptions and evaluations of interventions aimed at transfer students:

Kearns, A., Kirsch, B. A., & Cononie, V. (2017). Agoge: An information literacy game for transfer students.

*Reference Services Review*, 45(2), 314-331. doi:10.1108/RSR-09-2016-0054

Lafrance, H., & Kealey, S. B. (2017). A boutique personal librarian program for transfer students. *Reference*

*Services Review*, 45(2), 332-345. doi:10.1108/RSR-10-2016-0066

MacDonald, A., & Mohanty, S. (2017). Personal librarian program for transfer students: An overview.

*Reference Services Review*, 45(2), 346-354. doi:10.1108/RSR-10-2016-0071

# The role of information literacy and library instruction as it relates to transfer student success:

DaCosta, J. W., & Dubicki, E. (2012). From Lampitt to libraries: Formulating state standards to embed information literacy across colleges. *Library Trends*, 60(3), 611-636. doi:10.1353/lib.2012.0005

Tag, S. G. (2004). A library instruction survey for transfer students: Implications for library services. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 30(2), 102-108. doi:10.1016/j.acalib.2004.01.001

Tong, M., & Moran, C. (2017). Are transfer students lagging behind in information literacy? *Reference Services Review*, 45(2), 286-297. doi:10.1108/RSR-10-2016-0064

**Still, there are many gaps in the literature related to the “library experiences” of transfer students.**

**Who are our transfer students?**

**What were their previous  
library experiences?**

**What are their current  
perceptions?**

**We focused on transfer students at  
Metropolitan State University of Denver.  
Roughly half of MSU Denver's total  
enrollment of 20,000 transferred in.**

**The setting of our research is a bit different than other schools, though.**

**MSU Denver is located on the Auraria Campus.**

The Auraria  
Campus is home  
to three separate  
institutions.





In the middle  
of downtown  
Denver.

All sharing  
the same  
library.



**To get to know our  
students, we employed a  
concurrent transformative  
mixed methods design.**

**(Which means we combined institutional data, an online survey, and interviews, using the first two parts of the study to inform the third.)**

**The institutional data included a list of 8,522 transfer students, including their names, campus email addresses, and the number of credit hours they transferred to MSU Denver.**

**Next, we administered a seventeen item  
online survey, which included both  
open-ended and Likert scale questions.**

**While the survey was still open, we conducted semi-structured interviews and focus groups with eleven students.**

**So, what did we  
learn?**

**The mean number of  
credit hours students  
transferred was 45.2...**

...though the standard  
deviation was 26.8.  
( $m=45.2$  credit hours)

**We received survey responses  
from 459 students.  
(5.39% response rate)**

**41% of respondents transferred  
from two year schools...**

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**...44% of respondents transferred  
from four year schools**

**Only 59% came from  
other schools in Colorado.**

**What about their  
library experiences?**

**When asked about their comfort with using library resources, interviewees expressed a high level of confidence.**

**“This isn’t rocket science.”**

**We found no statistically significant correlation between past library instruction and student confidence with locating scholarly materials.**

# Are you comfortable with locating a scholarly/peer-reviewed article?

	Mean	SD	N
Attended Library Instruction	1.51	.959	276
Did Not Attend Library Instruction	1.92	1.130	181

*(5 point Likert scale 1=Strongly Agree 5=Strongly Disagree)*

# **How do students see the library?**

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**Several indicated that they viewed it primarily as a place to study and access print materials.**

**As it relates to that last point, many interviewees also mentioned visiting libraries around the Denver metropolitan area, not just Auraria.**

**In other words, the library experiences of our transfer students involve more than just the campus library.**

**Several students also indicated that in order to succeed, they felt they needed to figure things out on their own. (Not just for research assignments, but also financial aid, advising, etc.)**

**In lieu of seeking face-to-face help,  
students would use online videos to  
supplement their classroom instruction  
or answer other questions.**

**When asked about library usage at their previous institution, and what they felt transferred, none of the students mentioned specific library resources.**

**Instead, their responses focused on how they had learned to identify and evaluate different kinds of information.**

**But what did we  
*really* learn?**

**A lot of our assumptions about transfer students were wrong, including who they are, how they use libraries, and how we might be able to contribute to their success.**

**There is no “typical”  
transfer student.**

**Some implications  
for Auraria Library:**

**Students prefer online materials  
(especially videos) to face-to-face  
support, so we need to improve our  
online content.**

**Transfer students are also highly confident in their research abilities, so we must not frame outreach to them as “overcoming a deficit.”**

**Skills that transferred dealt more with critical evaluation of information, rather than the mechanics of online searching...**

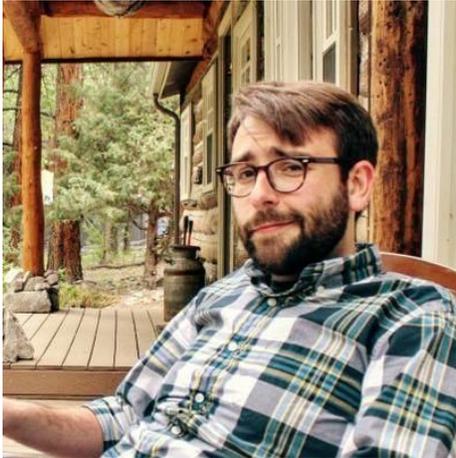
**...so first-year information literacy  
outcomes should probably focus more  
on the “what” than the “how.”**

**We need to partner with other  
four year schools just as much  
as with local community  
colleges (if not more).**

**Lastly, library and information literacy instruction needs to be integrated across the curriculum, rather than centered on the First Year Experience.**

# Questions?

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